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Message Text

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73
ACTION ARA-20

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 0078

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT BL
SUBJ: PAZ ESTENSSORO'S DECISION TO POSTPONE MNR NATIONAL CONCENTION

REF: LA PAZ 0049

1. REFTEL REPORTED VIEWS OF CLOSE SUPPORTER OF PAZ ESTENSSORO ON LATTER'S DECISION TO POSTPONE FOR ONE MONTH MNR NATIONAL CONVENTION, ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED TO BEGIN ON JANUARY 10. PAZ DECISION WAS IMMEDIATELY CRITICIZED BY MNR SUB-CHIEF CIRO HUMBOLDT, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY RUBEN JULIO AND SECRETARY-GENERAL JUAN JOSE RIVERA, NONE OF WHOM ATTENDED MEETING OF MNR'S NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (CEN) AT WHICH DECISION WAS TAKEN. NON-ATTENDANCE OF THESE THREE CEN MEMBERS AT MEETING WAS OBVIOUS REFLECTION OF THEIR DESIRE TO DISSASSOCIATE THEMSELVES FROM DECISIONS OF PAZ AND HIS SUPPORTERS DURING PRE-CONVENTION PERIOD. HUMBOLDT SUBSEQUENTLY DENOUNCED POSTPONEMENT OF CONVENTION AS UNJUSTIFIED MOVE, AND PREDICTED THAT CONVENTION -- WHEN HELD -- WOULD APPROVE CONTINUED
PARTICIPATION BY THE PARTY IN FPN COALITION. OTHER MEMBERS OF HIS GROUP WITHIN MNR ALSO RAISED SUGGESTION THAT A SPECIAL
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NATIONAL MEETING OF MNR LEADERS MIGHT BE CALLED PRIOR TO

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CONVENTION, IN ORDER TO CONSIDER AND RESOLVE DEFINITIVELY QUESTION OF CONTINUED MNR PARTICIPATION IN BANZER GOVERNMENT.

2. SOURCES WITHIN HUMBOLDT-LED FACTION OF MNR, AS WELL AS INDEPENDENT OBSERVERS, HAVE SUGGESTED OTHER MOTIFATIONS FOR PAZ ESTENSSORO'S DECISION, APART FROM THOSE CITED IN REFTEL. ACCORD-
ING TO THESE SOURCES, REAL MOTIVE FOR PAZ' ACTION WAS DESIRE TO STRENGTHEN HIS HOLD OVER CONVENTION, COMBINED WITH HOPE THAT EVENTS DURING JANUARY WOULD INCREASE SUPPORT FOR HIS POLICIES WITHIN MNR
RANKS. ALTHOUGH PAZ CAN INFLUENCE OUTCOME OF CONVENTION

THROUGH HIS CONTROL OF DELEGATE ACCREDITATION PROCESS, THESE SOURCES STATE, HE IS AT SERIOUS FINANCIAL DISADVANTAGE
AS COMPARED TO GOB-SUPPORTED
HUMBOLDT FACTION; THUS A DELAY IN OPENING DATE FOR CONVENTION MAY OFFER PAZ NEEDED OPPORTUNITY TO SECURE FINANCIAL BACKING TO STRENGTHEN HIS HOLD ON THE CONVENTION. AT SAME TIME,
PAZ MAY ALSO BELIEVE THAT RUMORED LABOR TROUBLES IN JANUARY, PLUS GROWING POPULAR DISCONTENT OVER SHORTAGES OF BASIC FOOD STAPLES, WILL BE TRANSLATED INTO A
FURTHER ALIENATION OF MASS OF MNR SUPPORTERS FROM GOB, WITH RESULTANT INCREASE IN SUPPORT FOR PAZ DECISION TO TAKE MNR OUT OF OFFICIAL FPN COALITION.
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